

INTIMATE OBSERVATIONS OF CAPTIVE BREEDING OF WILD,
DAMAGED BURROWING OWLS OF GREAT PLAINS STOCK
FOR RELEASE OF YOUNG

McKEEVER, K. *The Owl Rehabilitation Research Foundation, 21st St., RR 1, Vineland Station, Ontario, Canada LOR 2E0*

Color video with remotely controlled pan, tilt and zoom focuses on one family (of five families in 3600 sq. foot breeding complex) of Great Plains origin Burrowing Owls, as five fledglings emerge from underground tunnels 2½ meters from nest chamber. Scenes include parental feeding, development of the young owls from poor physical coordination to beginning hunting prowess, sibling competition, juvenile response to parental warning of overhead threat, sunning, preening, grooming and instinctive, though ineffectual, sand scuffing on burrow mound. Juvenile behavior near the home burrow demonstrates the extreme vulnerability to predation from land or air of these early fledglings, when clumsiness and inattention are most apparent.

THE ADVANTAGES PROVIDED BY AERIAL CORRIDORS
BETWEEN COMPOUNDS IN ALLOWING RESIDENT OWLS TO
FORM EFFECTIVE BONDS THROUGH CHOICE

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This is a remotely controlled video of successful breeding of wild, permanently damaged Northern Hawk Owls through the ability to self-select potential mates. The female of this pair had occupied a 600 sq. foot divided compound for five years, sharing the total space with first one, then another, arbitrarily introduced wild males without any evident bonding behavior. In the winter of 1992, a 12-foot-long aerial flight tunnel was suspended across to another compound containing two other males and a female—all damaged wild Hawk Owls. Immediately, the five-year resident female flew across the corridor, began negotiations with both males, apparently selected one (who followed her back up the corridor to her own long-held territory), drove out the incumbent, and commenced egg-laying—all in the space of four (4) days! The successful issue of three young is shown in nestling, fledgling and early flighted stages.

LOSING GROUND: A CALIFORNIA BURROWING OWL STORY

STENDER, S.A. *Scott A. Stender Video Productions, 306 Starling Road, Mill Valley, CA 94941*

The program is a look at the habitat loss problems facing California burrowing owl populations. Interviews with biologists and land managers are interspersed with natural history footage of the owls.